



Revision of the bathyal fish genus *Pseudonus* (Teleostei, Bythitidae); *P. squamiceps* a senior synonym of *P. platycephalus*, new to Australian waters

JØRGEN G. NIELSEN

Abstract

The viviparous, bathyal fish genus *Pseudonus* (Teleostei, Bythitidae, Bythitinae) is known from the Indo-Pacific Ocean. Three species have been described, all based on 1–2 specimens: *P. acutus* Garman, 1899 from the tropical East Pacific, *P. platycephalus* (Smith & Radcliffe, 1913) from the Indo-Australian area and *P. squamiceps* (Lloyd, 1907) from the Gulf of Aden. An additional 18 specimens have become available to justify this revision. The result has established the conspecificity of *P. squamiceps* and *P. platycephalus* with *P. squamiceps* the senior synonym of the two. The major differences between *P. acutus* and *P. squamiceps* are that the former has more dorsal (101–119 vs 95–102) and anal (74–85 vs 64–71) fin rays, more vertebrae (61–63 vs 55–58) and lacking pelvic fin rays (vs one of 15 specimens lacks pelvic fin rays). This is the first record of *P. squamiceps* from Australian waters.

Key words: Bythitidae, *Pseudonus*, revision, *P. platycephalus* synonymized

Introduction

The bathyal, viviparous genus *Pseudonus* Garman, 1899 is known from the Indo-Pacific Oceans. Three species are described: *P. acutus* Garman, 1899 based on one specimen from off Ecuador, *P. squamiceps* (Lloyd, 1909) based on two specimens from the Gulf of Aden and *P. platycephalus* (Smith & Radcliffe, 1913) based on two specimens from Philippine waters. Since then an additional 18 specimens embracing all three species have been examined. This increased the intraspecific variation to such a degree that no characters remain to justify the separation of *P. squamiceps* and *P. platycephalus*.

Consequently, *P. squamiceps* should be considered the senior synonym of *P. platycephalus*. The record of *P. squamiceps* from off Northwestern Australian is new to the Australian fauna. Furthermore, new information on *P. acutus* is provided.

Material and methods

For institutional abbreviations see Sabaj Pérez (2010). Terminology, measurements and counts follow Nielsen *et al.* (1999).

Pseudonus Garman, 1899

Type species. *Pseudonus acutus* Garman, 1899 by monotypy. Type locality off Galapagos Isls.

Diagnosis. A viviparous genus with depressed, partly naked head; eyes dorsolaterally directed; head pores large with a prominent, elliptical pore between eyes; opercular spine strong and slightly bent; cleithrum with sharp-pointed spine projecting posteriorly above pectoral peduncle; palatine teeth present; anterior gill arch with (2)–3 developed rakers; pelvic fins absent or with a single ray in each; pectoral fin lobe broader than long with 19–23